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ABSTRACT

Stressing the importance of incorporating speech skills throughout the curriculum, the articles in this journal provide ideas for developing speaking skills in all subjects and at all levels. The titles of the articles and their authors include the following: (1) "Speaking Skills: A Few Tips from an Old Timer" (Geoffrey R. Butler); (2) "Storytelling: A Process-Oriented Approach" (Amelia Goss and Mary Batchelder); (3) "Speech and Technical Writing: A Combined Approach" (Linda A. Desjardins); (4) "Challenging Verbal Passivity" (A. Jane Hamilton); (5) "The Play's the Thing: Students Acting Shakespeare" (Cheryl Christian); and (6) "The Rhetorical Cycle: Reading, Thinking, Speaking, Listening, Discussing, Writing" (Rodney D. Keller). The final two articles address the need to stress cognitive skills. "ERIC/RCS Update: Teaching Thinking Skills in English/Language Arts" (Fran Lehr) provides resources for teaching thinking, while "Mapping and the Developmental Writer" (H. Eric Branscomb) outlines a method for mapping papers that could also be used to map speeches. (SRT)

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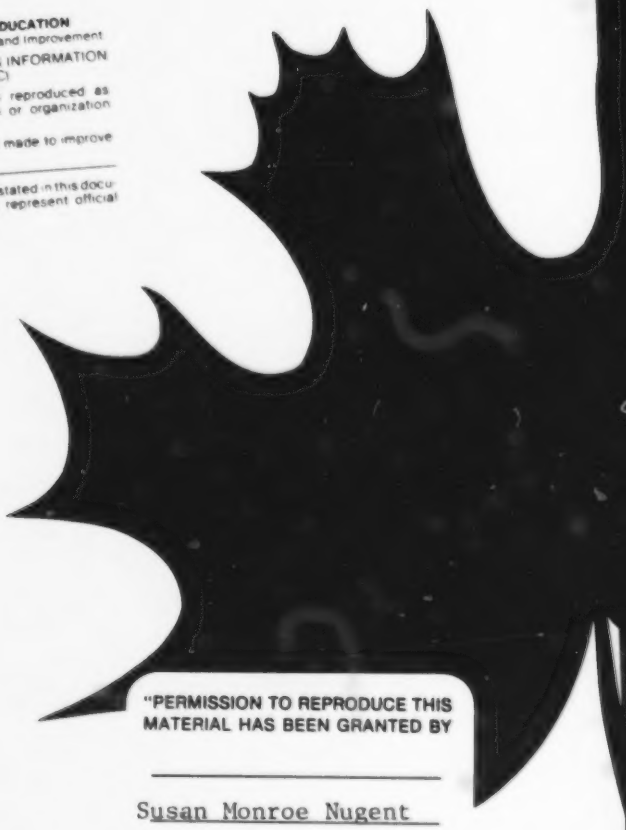

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THE LEAFLET

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of Teachers of English

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The Leaflet

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Notes on this issue:

The writers for this issue have suggested a number of ideas for developing speaking skills in the classroom at all levels. All stress the importance of incorporating speech throughout the curriculum. Geoffrey Butler emphasizes the need for integrating speech, as we do writing, into our classes. He includes many tips to help our students relax, enjoy, and learn from these experiences. Other authors focus on specific units that develop speaking abilities. Although some ideas may be outlined for a particular grade, most are applicable, with some structuring, to any teaching context. The final two articles within this issue do not directly address the topic under consideration. However, when we teach speech, we also teach thinking. The ERIC/RCS Update provides resources for teaching thinking and Eric Branscomb's article outlines a method for mapping papers which could also be used to map speeches.

I have enjoyed immensely editing this issue. Amelia Goss, one of the authors, first suggested the theme and reminded me how little literature we have in this area. The response from writers showed me that many teachers are thinking about the topic. For the first time, I received as many manuscripts from middle, junior, and senior high school teachers as I did from college teachers. This balance of contributions I hope will continue.

Susan Monroe Nugent

Speaking Skills: A Few Tips from an Old Timer

Geoffrey R. Butler

We are all too familiar with the typical student response to an assignment to be presented orally in the classroom: "Oh no! Do I have to?" When the day arrives, the individual report, seminar or panel is spoken--usually read from a manuscript--in a monotone that hides pressing anxieties and that is quite the opposite of our student's normal animated speech. The entire assignment is approached so reluctantly and is presented so lifelessly that the temptation for the teacher to forget oral work and teach through lectures and informal classroom discussion is overwhelming. After all, the students apparently hate it, and very little real learning in terms of the content of the assignment takes place. It is just easier all around for the teacher to present material.

This does not have to be the case. What follows are tips gleaned from twenty years of visiting classrooms on oral presentation days, teaching public speaking as a separate course, and incorporating oral work into my own non-public speaking courses. However, first the causes of the fears and weak reports need to be explicated.

Without doubt, one key to successful speech work in the curriculum is beginning early in a child's student life, both overall and within any given year. First, oral work should begin in the first grade and should be regularly practiced within the curriculum throughout a child's school career: elementary, junior high school and high school. Children have less fear of oral work when they are young; regular speech habits established early in a student's school career will eliminate later paralyzing stage fright.

Second, oral activities should begin as early in the school year as any other classroom activity. We generally have students write a theme the first days so we can gain an idea of their writing skills. The same holds true for speech skills. Oral work should begin early and continue often and regularly throughout the year.

Thus, speech must be made a normal part of the classroom activities from the first grade onward. A tendency I have found in elementary as well as junior high school and high school classrooms is to have a single oral report--whether it is show and tell, a project, or a book report--per quarter or even per half year. This format causes the oral presentation day to assume too great an importance; it is an abnormality within the regular round of school activities. Because it is resorted to so infrequently, anx-

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Geoffrey Butler, recently honored by NCTE for his curriculum design and program development in speech, teaches at Keene High School in Keene, New Hampshire.

ieties build until some students are all but paralyzed. Thus oral work comes to be dreaded rather than enjoyed.

Obviously, some fear, especially at first, is to be expected, and methods for overcoming this will be discussed. The point here is to have speech activities be a regular occurance, certainly on a weekly basis. Yes, they take time, especially compared to an entire class listening to a lecture or writing a theme, but the time can be made manageable through stressing shorter work more often rather than major reports a few times a year.

In brief, speaking skills must be integrated within the entire 1-12 curriculum on a regular basis--as regular as writing, for example.

Although some stage fright is inevitable, I guarantee that a student who has been speaking regularly throughout school life will be less petrified and will present materials in a variety of formats so that the entire class both learns and enjoys the experience. However, let us assume that familarity with speech skills and oral work in general has not been a regular part of a student's background. How, then, do we overcome stage fright? The key is to teach speech skills rather than assuming students, just because they have been talking all of their lives, naturally know how to make a presentation before an audience.

Tips for Helping Students Overcome Stage Fright:

1. Explain that stage fright is normal for everyone, including the teacher.

2. Discuss what stage fright is: although this can be done many ways, I prefer defining it as a fear of making a fool of oneself in front of one's peers.

3. Explain that stage fright--nervous tension, adrenalin flowing, an unusual sensation often centered in the pit of one's stomach--should be used rather than fought. This tension can easily be turned to excitement with a positive rather than a negative attitude.

4. Ask the class how many would prefer seeing a fellow student, or any one of their teachers, be dull and boring, versus how many would prefer seeing the student or teacher be exciting and interesting. The point to stress is that the audience is on the speaker's side before that person ever gets up to speak. After all, they are all going to be in the same boat, and no one wants to spend a year being bored.

5. Stress practice. Of course, the key is to make them realize that the practice should be as realistic as possible. Giving the presentation out loud twice is superior to giving it silently to oneself fifty times. Use a mirror, family, a classmate, any audience possible to add reality to the practice.

6. Ask them to begin with movement. An oral presentation that leads off with the speaker moving around tends to diminish the fear of the first few moments; once that hump is crossed, the rest is far easier.

7. Similarly, encourage them to use props. A simple series of posters listing key facts, names, whatever that can be set up and pointed to gives the speaker something to do and diminishes concentration on how scary it all is. Demonstrations, overhead projectors, slides, music--all add to the student's sense of security, of being prepared, and thus diminishes fear. Simply being able to move to use a prop helps.

8. Teach the concept of role playing as an integral part of any oral presentation. I do not necessarily mean a literal play-acting role; rather, the speaker should be in a particular role for every speech. I teach this under AOS: audience, occasion, speaker. Every presentation is to a certain audience, for a specific reason, and thus the speaker assumes the appropriate role to make the presentation. For one quick example, the student is assigned a particular literary figure to discuss important biographical information. The speaker should realize that the immediate problem is dullness. Thus, every prop of the historical period and/or person is worth its weight in gold. A costume would not be inappropriate. (I keep a costume/prop/rag box in the room just for such occasions. Students continually add to it.) Since the material might be dull by itself, the voice must overcome this. The student must play the role of high interest in the subject, for if not interested, the speaker cannot expect the audience to be interested.

9. Teach the appropriate skills for that particular presentation. We do not expect our students to write excellent five paragraph essays without our teaching the various concepts. In the same way, prepare the class for the presentations. Teach various methods of beginning, establishing an overall theme/goal, outlining, use of notes, and so on. Establish requirements for the presentation just as you would for a paper. Concentrate on specific speech skills--eye contact and physical liveliness, for example, or voice variations and emphasis to match the content. Thus the student will have specific goals to work toward rather than some amorphous assignment which will engender fear.

10. Encourage them to involve the audience. It is far less frightening to present something to an active audience than to one that is just sitting there staring. Obvious examples are a demonstration of some exercise routine or sports movement, but even the most abstract assignment (i.e., give the background to Mark Twain) has room for audience involvement. This can be through actual audience movement through hand outs and ques-

tionnaires, by asking direct questions of the audience...anything to make the audience nonpassive and thus less threatening.

11. I do not particularly stress this myself, as I feel belittling the audience can be counterproductive, but I have seen teachers be very successful in overcoming stage fright through this method. Have the speaker picture the audience in some silly way--perhaps all wearing their underwear. I have students who swear to me this works; they lose their own stage fright by realizing the audience is human also.

12. Make oral presentations be a normal part of your classroom. Everyone will speak often; it is expected. Habit eventually takes over and to the student's surprise, stage fright becomes very manageable.

Tips for Teaching Oral Presentations

I would like to conclude with two specific ideas that encourage students' view of oral work as, if not purely enjoyable, at least not overwhelming.

1. The first idea is to have students critique each other on the actual oral skills. I use both written note-like student critiques as well as verbal ones immediately after the presentation. At first, most of the comments will be on the obvious: eye contact, dull voice, jumping around, annoying habits, "ums," and so forth. Quite soon, however, as you establish more sophisticated criteria to look for, these basic comments (and indeed the problems themselves) disappear as everyone works toward the goal of effective presentations. Comments move toward use of body and facial expressions to convey the content, toward ideas for additional props or alternative presentation methods, toward organization and goals. Through the natural give and take this engenders, the original fears that cause severe stage fright tend to disappear.

I make sure to stress that comments can be positive as well as critical, and should be as specific as possible. Never "nice job; good voice." Rather, "you used your gestures and voice emphasis to make your points very well." I explain that if a comment is to be critical, then a possible solution should also be presented. Thus, "bad eye contact" becomes "You didn't look at us very much; why not pick out two or three friends and look at them in turn to begin?"

Due to a natural defensiveness that can arise, and because I also want to teach (through action) how to accept criticism, I never allow the student being commented on a reply to any specific criticism. This halts acrimonious argumentative situations that might arise. I tell the speaker that one does not have to accept the criticism, but that one cannot reply to the student giving the

critique. I explain defensive behavior, and how it can upset an entire group. Consequently, although some students have to swallow hard, oral presentations remain mostly positive experiences.

2. The second idea is my favorite technique for teaching speech skills in both public speaking and other classes. I have my students do extemps: extemporaneous or impromptu little speeches with very limited preparation time, often no more than two or three minutes. I expect them to be able to speak a full minute; in reality, by the time they are doing their second or third one during a term, they average three minutes each.

Many methods for choosing extemporaneous topics are available: single words (banana), concrete phrases (luscious rich huge banana split), situations (you are on a park bench when someone walks by and slips on a banana peel), pictures, a bit of a song, a physical object (perhaps from the prop box)--your imagination is the only limit. Naturally, topics relating to the course or class can be selected as well. However, when I am concentrating on speech skills, I prefer materials that have nothing to do with the course, as it seems more like a vacation to the students, and they approach the extemps more willingly.

I put the topics into a hat, or number the pictures or whatever randomly. The first speaker, and I generally select this person with care (I would never demand a shy person do the first extemp in a class, for example), gets two or three minutes to prepare. Then the second speaker chooses a topic just before the first speaks. Thus the work and speeches are dovetailed, and a large number of students can speak within a given class period.

We generally comment very briefly--perhaps two student comments and one teacher comment. I often ask for one critical and one positive comment. Sometimes, if the person has had problems with the topic, I ask for further ideas on what could have been said from the class.

Before extemps begin, I teach a simple four-step process for preparing:

A. Set an overall goal--one word or a single sentence.

B. Break this down into three subareas you can talk about; again, use single words if possible.

C. Try to get a clever opening--something beyond "My topic is..."

D. Tie the way you are going to end it to this opening if at all possible, just as you would in the introduction/conclusion of a good essay.

The gains in speech skills are enormous. Thinking on one's feet, organizing rapidly, concentrating on what one is saying rather than how one looks, use of voice and face and eyes...all improve with

surprising rapidity. Self-consciousness tends to disappear. The majority of my students actually look forward to extemp days. The carryover to more formal speaking occasions is quite high, especially when reinforced by the teacher.

Or couse, the students may insist on the teacher doing an extemp first, a sort of occupational hazard. I volunteer to do one first, on a topic they choose. It seems to alleviate some of their fears. I do my best to be flexible in presenting the topic they give me. Making a bit of a fool of myself is powerful encouragement.

Flexibility in terms of the content that comes from various topics is also a necessity on the part of the instructor. I guarantee you will be surprised at some of the areas that get discussed, even from the most innocuous of topics. I suggest having the students prepare at least some of the topics, and that the instructor then go through them to weed out the obviously undesirable ones. I also count each extemp performed as a quiz grade, and give each student two tries at different times, which adds a certain necessary seriousness of purpose.

It is not as much work as this perhaps makes it seem. The results in terms of increased speech skills and self-confidence are always an improvement, and sometimes quite amazing.

Oral work is a neglected part of many curriculum guides. It does not have to be a pain for the instructor nor fearful for the students. The days of deadly monotoned manuscript readings can be ended.

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Storytelling: A Process-Oriented Approach to Speaking Skills

Amelia Goss and Mary Batchelder

Last spring I was fortunate to have a storyteller, Mary Batchelder, for a week long artist-in-residence program. At the time, I knew little about storytelling, so my seventh grade students and I were in for an unexpected surprise. The "Cinderella" story she told us became so real in our imaginations that it has stayed with many of us every since. Former students have stopped by to ask if I am repeating my storytelling unit again, and yes, I am! I discovered that the *process* involved in learning a story is more important than the telling. The process of learning a story is something that all students can do although some will present their stories better than others. As a result, storytelling has become a process-oriented approach to teaching speaking skills in my classroom.

In "The Storytelling Stone" (Curtain, 1923), a tale told by the Seneca Indians, the Stone teaches the people of the village about stories, and the need to remember and retell the stories. The stone explains that, "Some of you will remember every word that I say, some will remember a part of the words, and some will forget them all-I think this will be the way..." And I think that this has been the way for many of our students. If we emphasize the *product* and ignore the *process* of learning to speak to others, to organize thoughts and convey them to others clearly, then some students will remember every word and some will forget them all. As a result, they will lack the confidence needed to express themselves in formal speaking situations. However, students do not need to end up like some of the villagers in "The Storytelling Stone."

This year when Mary returned, our goals were to help students learn a story by using a variety of speaking, listening, and writing activities and exercises, and then applying what they had learned by selecting a story, learning it, and presenting it to the class.

Mary started the workshop with "Cinderella." We worked with the story for five days, encouraging the students to use their imagination and retell the story the way they had imagined it whenever we participated in oral activities. We also integrated writing into many of the activities. Students were asked to describe the bedroom of Cinderella's dying mother, and the room in the

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Mary Batchelder has designed and conducted a wide variety of workshops and courses in the arts and movement for people of all ages.

cellar where Cinderella had to live after her step-mother and step-sisters moved in. Students wrote letters to imaginary friends explaining Cinderella's predicament, wrote to the step-mother as Cinderella, mapped out the places in the story, brainstormed a list of decisions Cinderella made, and tried to retell the story in two sentences.

You too can introduce your students to this process approach to speaking skills by guiding them through some of these activities and exercises. Begin by reading or, better yet, telling them your favorite story or folk tale. Then help them learn the story by using outlined circle activities. Create your own writing assignments based on the story you told. Some follow up activities have been suggested.

These activities are designed to improve group dynamics as well as to help students understand the underlying process involved in learning a story. They create a learning environment for storytelling. We want to do all we can to allow students to develop a "sense of story", and to help them move away from the literal, and analytic interpretation, or left-brained thinking, into an intuitive, mythical mode, or right-brained way of perceiving through which the power of the story should be felt. The circle is used as the structural basis for exercises. It creates a kind of group synergy which supports each person's effort and risk-taking.

The language of the folk tale, like the circle, is not linear. There is no beginning or end. But stories, like circles, do have structure. They enclose a particular area; they have a distinct inside and a distinct outside, just as the tellers and listeners do. The story's meaning and our understanding come to us from the connections between inner and outer events.

When we learn a story, we surround it and work on it from every possible direction. As we work, we allow our circle to surround us and work on us from every direction. Every person who is a member of a circle has an equal opportunity and responsibility to participate. No one is more important than anyone else; everyone is needed.

The circle exercises were developed with these thoughts in mind, with inspiration from a variety of sources ranging from modern dance education to native American rituals and customs. As you work with them, you will no doubt discover a goldmine of other ideas, especially if you attend to the *process* involved in learning the story. The exercises help students move beyond a self-conscious mode into a more confident, participatory, and supportive mode.

Activities

Purpose

To retell the story you have shared with students in their words.

Materials

A ball of yarn with knots tied in it every five to six feet.

Preparation

Form a circle. Students may sit in chairs or on the floor.

Presentation

Give one student the ball of yarn. Ask the student to retell the story while unraveling the ball of yarn until reaching the knot. Then, pass it to the next person who resumes the story while unraveling the yarn. Continue passing the ball around the circle, unraveling as the story is told. You may want to stop the teller and ask members of the circle to add details to the teller's version.

Adapted from: *Notes Plus: A Quarterly of Practical Teaching Ideas,* Juanita Harris and Joan Bereswill, Franklin Sherman School. McLean, Virginia.

Purpose

To create the physical setting of the story with sensory details.

Preparation

Form a circle. Students may stand or sit.

Presentation

Ask a student to walk around the outside of the circle. While walking, this student describes the vision (the image making quality of the imagination that draws from any or all the senses) of any place in the story. Encourage students to "see", "hear", "smell", "taste", and "feel" that place. There are no wrong answers. Continue to have students walk the circle and share their visions until everyone has had a turn, or until a variety of descriptions have been described.

Follow up

Have students write a one page description of the physical setting of the story using sensory details based on their "vision".

Purpose

To interpret a character's voice.

To discover the variety of voices that exist that students can call upon in the telling of a story.

Preparation

Form a circle. Students should be standing.

Presentation

Ask a student to walk into the circle and deliver a line that might have been said by any character in the story. Then have the members of the circle "echo" the same line back to the student. Critique. Continue the process giving as many students as possible the opportunity to try out different ways of saying lines from the story.

Purpose

To map out the setting of the story within the boundaries of the circle.

To develop a multi-dimensional picture of the whole story by imagining filming the story and building the sets.

Preparation

Brainstorm a list of locations or "filmsets" in the story. Then, create a circle. Students should be standing.

Presentation

Invite one student to walk into the circle and locate one place in the story. For "Cinderella" a student might locate her house or the Prince's Palace. Student defines the shape, size, and/or texture of that place before rejoining the outer circle. Then ask another student into the circle to locate another place in the story. Have them enter the circle as though the place already located actually exists. Ask questions about distance, size, and time. How many miles is it from Cinderella's house to the palace? How long does it take to get to town from her house? Continue until all the locations in the story are defined. Encourage them to imagine that these places really do exist within the circle.

Follow up

Have students map out the setting of the story. Use mapping techniques such as legends and scale. Maps can then be displayed.

Purpose

To share some aspect of the story with another classmate within the imaginary setting in the circle.

To improvise lines from a story using clear and concise language.

Preparation

Instead of asking a student to begin this activity, suggest that maybe someone is courageous enough to go into the circle and invite another student. Students will know they're ready when their feet start itching or their heart starts pounding. The members of the circle must support the students to take risks and build confidence.

Presentation

A student enters the circle and invites a classmate. Then the first student presents to the classmate any line from the story. The classmate responds with a new line. They rejoin the circle and another student enters the circle and invites a classmate to share some aspect of the story. Continue until all students have a chance to present a line from the story.

A nice variation on this circle activity is to have the two students share their first line, favorite line, and last line of their own story that they *are* learning for a presentation.

We hope you will try some or all of these exercises and add your own ideas to our starter collection. After you and your students work through some of these activities, have your students use the same activities and exercises when they learn their own stories. Maybe your students will discover, as so many of mine did, that it is not so difficult to get up in front of the class when you really know what you're talking about.

References and Resources

Curtin, Jeremiah, *Seneca Indian Myths*. E.P. Dutton and Company Inc., 1923. Renewal, 1951 by Jeremiah Curtain Cardell.

Storytellers

American Storytelling Resource Center, Inc., 1471 Chanticleer Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062 (408) 475-8939. Send stamped, self-addressed envelope with request for information. National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling. Box 112, Jonesborough, TN 37659 (615 753-2171.

Teachers' Guides

"From the Brothers Grimm: American Versions of Folktale Classics." Send $4.00 per guide to Davenport Films, Inc., Route 1, Box 527, Delaplane, VA 22025 (703) 592-3701. The series is broadcast on educational television or write to Tom Davenport for more information.

Books

Buys, William, Thomas Sill, and Roy Beck. *Speaking by Doing-A Speaking and Listening Test.* National Textbook Co., Skokie, IL 60077, c. 1981.

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Note to Readers:

One of my greatest fears as editor has been realized. At least one subscriber received an incomplete edition of Volume 84 Number 3, Issues in Teaching English. I regret this happening. Please let me know if you were sent a similar copy.

Susan Monroe Nugent

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Speech and Technical Writing: A Combined Approach

Linda A. Desjardins

When already-employed students are asked what motivated them to enroll in my technical writing workshop, the same answer keeps coming up: "I can do the engineering all right; but it's the writing I need help with." It seems that once the technical part of a job has been completed, the dreaded documentation must begin. This writing can take a variety of formats ranging from a short memo to a full-blown report.

After conceding that they never expected their jobs to require so much writing, the students usually go further and cite another unanticipated job requirement for which they feel equally unprepared: giving presentations, particularly on the material they have just written.

Colleges currently offer courses which meet these needs, courses the students might have taken in their degree programs: technical writing and public speaking. However, at best, only one of these two courses is a technical degree requirement. Consequently, students who do wish to enroll in either technical writing and/or speech must use these classes as one or two of their precious electives. Enrollments indicate a reluctance to do so. Instead, students tend to use electives to pick up technical courses outside their major to broaden their backgrounds and increase their job prospects.

If one of our goals in education is to properly prepare our students for the job market, we would be doing them a service by offering one three-credit course which not only addresses itself to the technical writing tasks the future job holder is likely to face, but also to the oral presentation of that material. The course could combine a streamlined version of a technical writing course with a modification of the traditional speech class, thus it could meet specific job needs. The concept of combining speech and technical writing is not completely new, but the idea of combining speech and technical writing is not receiving extensive exposure, and it should warrant consideration.

What follows here is an interpretation of a combined speech and technical writing course including a course description, instructional objectives, recommended texts, and an explanation of and rationale for assignments and their sequencing.

Linda A. Desjardins teaches composition, speech, and technical writing at Northern Essex Community College in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

Course Description

Speech and Technical Writing is a 3-credit course providing theory and practice in effective technical writing and oral presentations. The course will provide an overview of the concept of communication and will focus on the importance of purpose, audience, organization and format in both writing and speaking. Short written and oral assignments addressing each of these areas will lead to a comprehensive final report and oral presentation.

Instructional Objectives

After participating in the course, the students will be able to:

* Place technical writing and public speaking or presentations within the framework of a communication theory.
* Provide a rationale for clarity and conciseness in writing and oral communication.
* Determine purpose and audience in writing and speaking.
* Tailor content level and organization to readers' and listeners' needs.
* Compose a letter of introduction and resume.
* Select the format and layout most appropriate to writing purpose.
* Select appropriate speech formats and visual aids.
* Write process descriptions, physical descriptions, and definitions appropriate to audience's level.
* Deliver an introductory speech, demonstration, and visually-aided presentation.
* Use an overhead projector.
* Select appropriate graphics to support text and oral presentation.
* Produce and present a report which incorporates skills learned in class.

Recommended Texts

Houp, Kenneth W. and Thomas E. Pearsall. *Reporting Technical Information*, Fifth Edition. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1984.

Zimmerman, Gordon I. *Public Speaking Today*. St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 1979.

Suggested Assignments and Their Sequencing

An appropriate starting point for a course concentrating in speech and technical writing is with an overview of the communication process itself. Wilbur Schramm has provided models representing the communication process in his selection "How Communication Works" in *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication*, pp. 4-8. A discussion of the ostensible goal of the writer and speaker, to share meaning, and an examination of places where the communication process may break down, where "noise" may interfere, whether in writing or in speaking, will help establish the need for clarity in all communications. The first chapter of *Public Speaking Today* would also be helpful here. This discussion establishes the base on which all further assignments in the course are built, for they are all designed to minimize the chance of communication breakdowns and enhance the possibility of sharing meaning.

In the second week of the course, the need to tailor information to fit the audience would be explored. A discussion of potential audiences and an estimation of their approximate level of technical knowledge will be shown to be crucial to the pre-writing and pre-speech processes. At this time, the many variables which a speaker may control or account for before speech preparation could be considered. These discussions of material-shaping influences would be followed by an examination of guidelines speakers should consider regarding their own appearances and their preparation for the speaking assignment. Chapters 1,2, and 3 in *Reporting Technical Information* and Chapters 2 and 8 in *Public Speaking Today* support the second week's material.

The third and fourth weeks of the course would allow the students to apply the preceding week's theory to their own lives. Two writing tasks and one speaking assignment could be the vehicles. Because the letter of application hypothetically initiates the job search, the students would be asked to select an advertisement for a position in their field and prepare a letter of application and an updated resume. Supporting information needed for these written assignments can be found in Chapter 13 in the Houp and Pearsall text.

A successful letter of application is likely to generate an interview appointment. In the interview, the presentation or selling of self begins. As a clear sense of what to say and how to present that material is critical here, a speech which simulates the job interview would be assigned. Students would be asked to introduce themselves to the class, identify the position they seek, and pre-

sent their job qualifications. The class collectively plays the role of interviewer and may question the "job applicant." Feedback on the effectiveness of the introductory speech would be given orally by the class and in writing by the instructor.

The fifth week of the course would further reinforce the concept of audience while considering the role of purpose in communication. The first of two writing assignments, preparing a report worksheet, is patterned after Houp and Pearsall's Chapter 2 exercise (p. 18). The worksheet provides the students with a concrete plan for any writing assignment as it requires the writer to identify the target reader, use specific statements to frame the purpose for writing, establish the writer's role, list the appropriate supporting materials, and establish a preliminary organizational plan.

The second writing assignment involves a task at the heart of technical writing: writing definitions. In a technical writing seminar, held in August, 1984, Pearsall vividly established the importance of this task when he referred to definitions as "the building blocks of technical writing." To underscore the need for clear, concise definitions, it would be advisable to establish the premise that meaning is shared when items, concepts, or theories are described in such a way that only one possible meaning can result before the students practice writing definitions. This assignment asks students to compose definitions for an item or concept in their field, varying the degree of technicality to suit both lay and expert audiences. Chapter 6 in Houp and Pearsall provides instruction on writing definitions.

The oral counterpart to writing definitions might be labelled "speaking to inform." In the sixth week of the course, an oral presentation of the written definitions would be assigned. To perform these presentations effectively, students would need to understand and select organizational patterns and delivery strategies most suited to their audiences, purpose, and material. The Zimmerman text offers relevant discussions of speech organization in Chapters 3 and 4, speech strategy in Chapter 5 and speaking to inform in Chapter 9. The Houp and Pearsall text addresses organizational plans in writing in Chapter 8 and provides supplementary support here.

In the seventh and eight weeks of the course, the already established skills could be developed by increasing the degree of difficulty of the writing and speaking assignments. In their jobs, professionals are frequently called upon to document or describe the workings of somethings they know very well. In this situation, a paradox of infomation may result: the professionals may know their topic so thoroughly that they have difficulty remembering what the reader or audience does not know. In order to describe

a process, key ideas and their proper sequencing must be identified and then presented using a logical organizational plan. To provide practice for this likely job requirement, students would be asked to write a process description appropriate to their field for a lay audience. Chapter 14 in *Reporting Technical Information* supplies comprehensive coverage of process descriptions.

Similarly, a typical job requirement in business and industry is the demonstration of a process. In the eighth week of the course, the process description just written could become the material for an in-class demonstration. A demonstration would require the students to add physical manipulation to their oral presentational skills. To prepare them for this assignment, guidelines for the handling of visual aids and suggestions for dealing with nervousness should be considered. Chapters 6 and 7 in *Public Speaking Today* contain helpful material on using audiovisual aids and on managing nervousness.

In addition to writing process descriptions, there are many situations on the job which call for accurate physical descriptions: a part may need to be built to specifications, or the projected appearance of an item being designed may need to be conveyed before the prototype can be built. Writing a comprehensive physical description, a technical writing skill which again builds on those already introduced, would be handled in the course's ninth week. The students would be asked to describe a concrete object appropriate to their fields. As with all the technical writing, the successful description must be tailored to targeted audiences, language must be exact, and a logical organizational plan must be followed. Houp and Pearsall discuss descriptive writing in Chapter 7.

Definitions and descriptions require a skillful handling of language; but regardless how meticulous the writing may be, there are instances when a picture or a graphic make a point clearer, reinforce an idea, or cause the material to have a greater impact. In the tenth week of the course, attention would be focused on producing illustrations to support the definitions or descriptions already written. The importance of appearance and the recognition of the negative impact a sloppily prepared or improperly used graphic may have could be stressed. A follow-up presentation of guidelines for illustrations, proper labelling of the graphic, its key points and the view, if appropriate, would precede a workshop on drawing illustrations. Effective use of graphics, the concept that illustrations should play a supporting role and should clarify or reinforce, rather than dominate, would be included in the discussion at this point.

Another visual element important to technical writing and reports is the presentation of raw data, measurements, survey results, test findings, polls and other statistical material. The eleventh week of the course would first examine theory behind the handling and placement of charts and graphs within the report. Several principles would need to be established: that numerical facts do not have meaning by themselves, that they must be analyzed or explained or related to other items or interpreted before they have significance; that just what the numbers mean can be manipulated by the writer's presentation; and that the type graph selected affects interpretation as much as material contained within the graph. In addition to this concern with technical accuracy and representation, impact of the visual appeal of the graph must be taken in account. Discussion of unit, balance, contrast and meaning is appropriate here. In chapter 2 of *How to Prepare Charts and Graphs for Effective Reports*, Robert Lefferts considers these principles in detail, as do Houp and Pearsall in Chapter 12.

To apply the theory behind good graphics, students would be asked to bring in some raw data relating to the item they have defined or described, or concerning their field in general. They would then be asked to select a point or two their statistics would support and represent it in an appropriate graphic. The successful graphic would not only be accurate, it would be named, have proper labels, and display unity, balance, contrast and meaning.

At this time in the course, a correlation could be made between the psychological effect of graphics on the reader and the psychological effect non-verbal communication can have on the listener. A discussion of the messages a speaker may be inadvertently sending would allow students to examine and modify their own speaking habits. This consideration of kinesics and proxemics would acquaint students with communication influences extending beyond language. The awareness of the effect of the physical set-up of a room and the speaker's positioning there might give the speaker more control over the environment, again increasing the possibility of sharing meaning. Zimmerman considers many of these ideas in Chapters 1 and 11.

The material and theory covered in the tenth and eleventh weeks could be put to use in the twelfth week in preparing for another typical job situation. In business and industry, the overhead projector is used extensively in presentations. Because outside technical support is not always available, presenters are often left to their own devices for preparing their material. Familiarizing students with the preparation of transparencies or view graphs and the use of the overhead projector would be appropriate.

Students would be asked to transfer one of their illustrations, graphs or charts onto a transparency and deliver a presentation incorporating that material. This assignment would provide practice with speaking while having to operate the overhead projector and point to areas on the graph, without losing contact with the audience. Chapter 19 in Houp and Pearsall instructs in using the overhead projector.

With many of the various components of the technical report already composed and several speaking skills practiced, a closure process would begin in the thirteenth week of the course. The layout and organization of a final report comprised of the written couse work and the preparation for the delivery of a final presentation would be considered. Once again, purpose and audience would be guideposts for the report's and presentation's assembly. In selecting layout and an organizational plan, the students would have to determine who will be reading the report, for what reason, and what that reader expects to see. Compartmentalizing the writing to suit the readers' needs, using previews, labelling all sections, and numbering graphs and illustrations properly would be report requirements. Additionally, the students would need to prepare prefatory elements such as cover and title pages, a table of contents and list of illustrations and such supplementary elements as appendixes and documentation. Chapters 8 through 11 in the Houp and Pearsall text are an invaluable resource in this stage of the writing.

The assembled report would be the springboard for a final oral presentation. As they gathered their writing components for their final report, the students would be incorporating all their speaking skills for the final presentation. The type of presentation given would vary to suit the content of each student's report and would be discussed beforehand. The students might then choose to use visual aids, demonstrations and/or overhead to enhance their deliveries.

Presenting the same material in both written and oral formats, the subject matter for the fourteenth and fifteenth weeks of the course, should reinforce finally the course premise: that shared meaning is more likely to occur when speakers and writers let their messages be shaped and influenced by purpose and audience while they exercise control over whatever variables they can in order to reduce the chances of noise or breakdowns in the communication process.

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Challenging Verbal Passivity

A. Jane Hamilton

Sitting facing the television, muttering half thoughts or reactions into black space...this is the primary linguistic training ground for most of my students. It does not in any way adequately serve the goal of developing and strengthening verbal communication because there is no meaningful interaction. I have before me in my classroom a generation of youngsters whose world encourages linguistic passivity.

It falls to me as a language arts instructor not merely to hone public speaking skills, but even more challenging and difficult, to build an awareness of the demands of clear verbal communication on the most rudimentary interpersonal levels. My strategy is to counter the socio-cultural condoning of passivity by demanding extensive and precise verbal expression. Students have opportunities to experience a variety of uses of oral language and to feel the gratification that results from having clearly conveyed one's exact meaning.

I attack the problem with a combination of modelling and demand. I try never to talk down to students. If the right word is one they may not understand, then I briefly define it before going on. Second, there is a great deal of discussion in my classes in which all students are called on to take part. All discussions are conducted in complete sentences only. From the first day of school in September, I make this demand and encourage adherence by beginning the sentence for a student who attempts a one word answer and giving time for the student to modify response.

TEACHER: "How is Jody feeling in this part of the story?"
STUDENT: "Sad."
TEACHER: "Use a complete sentence, please. Jody is feeling...."

By the end of the first quarter this prompting is seldom any longer necessary and we are already working on extending the depth of answers to include reasons and verifications.

At the same time we are constantly working on vocabulary. Of course there are the new words in the story or the technical terms in the science lesson to be studied, but I mean also working to diminish the use of vague terms and slang. While I believe one should never denegrate a student's vernacular, I also believe it is necessary to point out the variety of audiences with which

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students will interact and therefore be sensitive to using appropriate language.

TEACHER: "What sort of boy is Jody?"
STUDENT: "Jody is wicked nice!"
TEACHER: "Is being 'wicked nice' the same as being a wicked witch?"

or

"Does 'nice' have the same meaning as it does when two girls sitting on the beach see the lifeguard walk by and say, 'Oh-h-h, he's nice!' ?"

With humor and help and consistent demand, by constantly modelling extensive vocabulary, by being seen to search for the right word, by demonstrating use of the dictionary when I am reading, writing, and speaking, I hope to develop a group of young people whose oral language ability is growing apace with all their other skills.

The key is interaction; to counter the effects of passivity one must be active. Conversation, discussion, explanation, questionning, jokes, oral language on all levels must be at the heart of the language arts curriculum. From appreciating puns, to listing as many verbs as possible that mean "to walk", to discussing why "a dirty old man" is scarey, but "a soiled elderly gentleman" is pathetic; as wide a variety as possible of oral linguistic experience and exploration is necessary to produce a young adult who can willingly and confidently and clearly share thought verbally.

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The Play's the Thing: Students Acting Shakespeare

Cheryl Christian

Math and writing phobias cannot even begin to measure up to Shakespeare block. Every year, thousands of students, and perhaps their teachers, approach Shakespeare with great anxiety. For many students Shakespeare has come to mean "impossible to understand."

One way to demystify Shakespeare is to introduce him as a theatre personality. My own acting experience with Shakespeare began when I was quite young. I remember vividly that experience. When spoken and performed, Shakespeare's magical words infuse actors and audience alike with enthusiasm.

As Shakespeare wrote, acted, and owned theatre shares to be able to eat and pay the bills, I approach his plays in a realistic fashion, and ask that my students do so as well. I provide enough background to recreate the times and tell them of the demanding theatre-going audience. Students learn about the discrimination actors suffered, and of the legalities that threatened the very life of the theatre. We talk of scandal, intrigue and the politics of his day. The ways Shakespeare tried to earn the favor of his monarch are examined. It couldn't hurt Shakespeare's company to present Scotland and King James' ancestors favorably in *Macbeth*. Theatre houses, costumes, props, staging, acting--all are discussed. Students compare the theatre of Shakespeare's time to contemporary entertainment and discover similarities and differences. Such discussions make Shakespeare more human and understandable.

Once enticed into the world of theatre, students are ready to move into the play itself. I tell them that we have become the acting company for a production, and will conduct rehearsals with performance in mind. After I introduce the play, we begin with a read-through which will take about three weeks. The purpose of a read-through is to gain an understanding of the play, and to provide actors time to work out their motivations and notice the intricacies and delights of the play. Often, this becomes a line by line or speech by speech analysis to aid understanding. Students are encouraged to relax, ask questions, discuss character, and try different types of reading styles.

Thus reassured, the students usually volunteer readily and even compete for roles. If students are reluctant to take roles, the more

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exciting parts can be offered to the most aggressive students. Smaller parts can be assigned to the more timid. It's best to know the "cast" and to have had a successful poetry unit some time prior to the Shakespeare unit. In the theatre world, directors conduct read-throughs with the actors seated around a table, coffee in hand. I try to keep my students equally relaxed.

During this time, the actors gain confidence. Some will ask about seeing a play. Many Shakespeare plays are available in a variety of versions on video-cassette. Even seeing a bad version can be worthwhile. One terrible rendition of *Macbeth* invites criticism from the students, and they argue over how it could be better performed and staged. Such viewings encourage the students to want to try to perform it themselves since they believe they could do a better job, or could show the rest of us what they mean by making changes in the performance. I try to keep from showing them more exciting interpretations, such as Zeferelli's *Romeo and Juliet,* at this stage, because I don't want to discourage them from trying to perform the work themselves. Zeferelli's version would be all too difficult to try to follow.

Towards the end of the read-through, I warm them up for the idea that we can perform parts of the play. I find that the thought of memorizing long passages frightens them; consequently, I approach the performance of Shakespeare from a reader's theatre format. Books can be used on stage and movement does not have to be elaborate.

At this point, it's helpful to move classes into some sort of theatre setting or environment. My school does not have a theatre, but we have turned a lecture hall that accommodates a hundred and twenty people into a theatre. We've hung lights and I have developed a costume wardrobe, prop room and scene dock. Even if you don't have these available, some kind of space separate from an audience will suffice for a stage. Students may bring their own props and make-shift costumes. Readers theatre *suggests* sets, props, costumes and movement; it does not have to be overburdened with technical details. I describe reader's theatre and oral interpretation briefly, and give them a small performance to show them how it's done.

Once relocated, they are given their assignment. They may form groups of their own, choosing a leader or director for each group. Using the play, they must develop a fifteen to twenty minute presentation that examines an important issue or character. This shouldn't prove difficult because many issues and characters have been discussed during the read-throughs. They may take one scene, or several different ones, or isolate speeches and lines as

they see fit. They write an introduction selected to be performed prior to the scenes they've selected.

After students have developed their scripts, they are ready to cast parts and rehearse. The director becomes responsible for ultimate casting decisions and for guiding the actors and crew in all stages of rehearsal.

As the students work, help them out by watching groups and providing suggestions for the director where appropriate. Stress character analysis, for until each actor has a grasp of his character, interaction with other actors remains difficult. I introduce several exercises that I use when directing. The character analysis sheet lists several areas: age, physical profile, voice description, clothing, psychological profile, dominant character trait, activities that characterize the person, his or her self image, background, interests, vocal and physical idiosyncracies, and significant past events. The actor is required to write this information down and invent these details for himself if Shakespeare does not provide them in the script. Another way to create character is for the performer to write journal entries daily from the character's point of view.

Finally, all actors must have their silent scripts in order. The silent script refers to what the character thinks while other characters are speaking. What does Romeo think while Juliet soliloquizes? What does Caeser think while Calpurnia recounts her dream? I have each of them write the actual script on the left-hand side of the page and their silent script on the right-hand side. They are just as responsible for knowing this silent script as they are for the actual script.

Once character is developed, it becomes easier for actors and actresses to interpret their lines and provide meaningful facial expressions and physical gestures. Motivation inspires appropriate movement and staging evolves. As a result, the director has an easier time with checking the staging, making sure the actors' voices are distinguishable, and seeing that the meaning of the play comes across.

The actors become as tense and excited performing for their own classmates as they would for a larger audience. The students, after all, have studied theatre and a Shakespearean play. Their audience is knowledgeable and critical. As a result, performances take on new meaning for both audience and players. Shakespeare has become part of their experience. They learn that "the play's the thing."

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The Rhetorical Cycle: Reading, Thinking, Speaking, Listening, Discussing, Writing

Rodney D. Keller

My students and I need help. I give them a paper assignment after several class discussions, and I see confused stares wondering what I expect from them. I ask if there are any questions and someone whines, "I don't get it; what are we supposed to do?" I summarize hours of discussion into a single sentence and send them away to write a masterpiece. As a student, I remember my own frustrations with writing. Although the teacher knew what she expected of us, I didn't know. I needed someone to take me through a paper step by step, showing me I could survive the torture of writing. I thought only I had a hard time writing or that I was the only dumb one in the class not knowing what was happening. The roles have now turned; I still remember my frustrations, but new frustrations are creeping in as students panic after an assignment. Even after detailed explanations, the assignments are not clear because the students have not practiced the assignment principles. Practice makes the assignment understandable. The students need practice exercises. I, like most teachers, am always searching for new strategies explaining how to write as well as how to disguise the pain of writing. The answer to many of my frustrations is the rhetorical cycle, a step by step approach to writing allowing practical classroom experience before students actually write, making the whole experience less painful. The rhetorical cycle is just that, a cycle. It is a process of six sequential steps. The steps are reading, thinking, speaking, listening, discussing, and finally writing. Notice that the last step is writing; writing is the end result. I will explain how this cycle works in my classroom by using a paper assignment, sample readings, student experiences, and student writings.

The rhetorical cycle began developing when I realized that, historically, rhetoric was speaking, not writing. Writing was introduced to rhetoric to help the speaker organize his thoughts. Today, however, rhetoric generally means composition without speech. Speaking is necessary to good writing. I now use speech for students to organize their thoughts; I have reversed the concept of historical rhetoric.

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Reading

The first step of the rhetorical cycle is reading. Readings serve not only as models of rhetorical modes and devices, but readings allow students to stockpile information. Readings stimulate good thinking. I use a thematic rhetoric/reader. With each essay the students read, I insist they respond with personal examples demonstrating how the essay affects them or reminds them of a particular incident in their lives. For example, one thematic unit is "People Under Stress." Some readings include George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant," Philip Roth's "Defender of the Faith," and Robert Frost's "The Silken Tent." An obvious theme common to all three is peer pressure: the pressure to shoot the elephant so Orwell won't look a fool, the pressure to be fair yet impartial with the few Jewish soldiers in a Gentile army, and the pressure of tent pegs and cords tethering a tent in a summer breeze. As a class, we discuss this theme in relation to the readings. Our discussion centers on how the authors develop their ideas, appeal to the reader, and use various modes and devices. I present paradigms illustrating definition, classification, comparison, narration, description, and argumentation. The students learn summary, synthesis, and critique. In the readings I've mentioned, students recognize obvious patterns of narration and concrete description such as the elephant's grinding the Coolie or the dew-loosened tent cords. Students also notice subtle definitions of implied terms such as "peer pressure" created by society, one's own religion, or by one's self. Students now compare authors' definitions with their personal definitions of peer pressure. They learn to summarize ideas, synthesize those ideas and essays with personal experiences, and evaluate the significance of what they're doing. Reading is the basis of thinking and writing.

Thinking

After discussing the theme of peer pressure presented in the readings, we begin the next phase of the rhetorical cycle: thinking. The students become more actively involved. During class discussions, some passively sit waiting to hear what I or the more vocal students in the class have to say about the essay. Now each student must become involved. Although thinking sounds passive, my class exercises involve work. Writing and thinking are inseparable, and to get students to think, I have them write. This thinking section involves invention, prewriting, organization, and strategies for good writing. I structure this section by having the students brainstorm and list experiences they have had with peer pressure. They simply select several experiences and free-write.

(To help the students, I also require they write a personal history based on archetypes, and the topics pertaining to peer pressure include initiation, outcast, scapegoats, star-crossed lovers, woman figure, and devil figure.) The students make correlations between their readings and their lives. For example, my student David has concentrated his brainstorming and free-writing on adolescent peer pressure. His list includes encounters with and not necessarily submission to drinking, dating, cheating, lying, destroying property, and deceiving others. David selects the destruction and deception topics since they appear least obvious. He and the class free-write about their topics for ten minutes. This time forces students to make their ideas and experiences concrete. Ten minutes isn't enough time to develop thoughts; they're just dabbling with new ideas.

After freewriting, students organize thoughts by reviewing notes on the rhetorical modes and devices we have already discussed. They determine whether or not their ideas work best as comparison, description, narration, definition, classification, argumentation, or combination. The students now write for a purpose instead of writing for a mode or device. Students imitate the paradigms we discuss and informally outline their thoughts stimulated by the readings, brainstorm, freewrite, and paradigm. The students now have ideas, and perhaps a little surprising to them and to me is those ideas are organized.

Speaking

After the students have quickly and informally organized their thoughts, the most significant aspect of the cycle takes place. The students explain to a small group their ideas. They verbalize their outlines. David, for example, uses his outline to tell his group about peer pressure by submitting to a dare and breaking outdoor Christmas lights in the neighborhood. He also confesses pretending to be on a boy scout paper drive so he can obtain adult magazines from someone's home. The benefits of verbalization are numerous. The student forces herself to express ideas to a particular audience whom she can see and identify. As she rehearses the information from her outline, she uses examples from both her life and the essays to prove her point. She supports her assertions because her audience expects her to. Although some students are terrified thinking they have to express their ideas to peers, it still isn't as horrifying as the blank paper or screen threatening them. Students are weak with verbal skills, but those skills are more developed than writing skills, and students soon feel comfortable. (It's important to maintain a friendly atmosphere in the groups. I encourage the use of friends in groups,

but by the end of the first few weeks of class, there really is no need since group work makes the class friendly.) As the students speak, they expand and evaluate those thoughts and experiences. The ideas become more important than words since the students don't think of every word they use. Students become more concerned with getting ideas across. The ideas flow more smoothly, and the informal setting of talking from an outline puts students more at ease than if they were writing a paper of presenting a formal speech. Speaking is simply a means to organize and present ideas. Speaking has improved my students' writings more than any other strategy.

Listening

While a student is speaking, the other members of her group are listening. Listening must be active to be effective. Students outline the speaker's thoughts, and since the students are familiar with the same essays, the group also analyzes how effectively the speaker has used the essays. The listeners list the main idea of the talk, list the most/least effective example, examine context and organization problems as well as note areas difficult to understand or needing more explanation. The students concentrate on what works well in the presentation and what needs improvement. Returning to David's paper experience, the group likes his examples of the Christmas lights and adult magazines because they're fresh, personal, and concrete. His talk is organized and easy to outline, but one group member wants more details describing David's reactions to the peer pressure and to his guilt. Another member questions a connection David has made with the examples and essays. The group does not simply respond with "It's good," or "It's bad"; they must support their assertions. The students must listen and think critically.

Discussing

After the speaking/listening session, the group members discuss the speaker's ideas and presentation. This is another aspect of speaking/listening, but now there is two way communication. The students respond to various questions. For example, the writer/speaker tells what main idea she wants to achieve, what her chief points are, and how she develops the idea and points. She justifies her examples and explains why she organizes her essay according to a particular paradigm, or why she thinks her ideas are worth the group's time. The readers/listeners may respond to the speech by listing what they think is successful, what they like best and places where they are lost. Listeners also ask the writer

what parts of the outline give her the most trouble. David and his group discuss solutions to problems David should consider. For example, David asks what details he lacks describing the Christmas light episode. The group wants to participate with David as he describes that one night in his life. The details become sensuous and concrete down to the "ping" of the shattering bulb. David recreates the event and his personal guilt as more upsetting than a dozen greasy bean burritos smoldering in his bowels, a feeling that often occurs without provocation. David senses his ideas are not balanced. He knows the effects of negative peer pressure, but he also wants to address positive peer pressure. David relates examples of competitive peer pressure improving his study habits and golf and tennis games. He and the group dissect the ideas and David's purpose, and David decides to include one paragraph of improved tennis because of pressure.

This discussion is essential since it is the effective rewriting of something that hasn't been written yet. The speech becomes the rough draft, the discussion becomes the revision, and finally, the ideas and methods of development are becoming more and more fine-tuned. (In fact, even after this exercise, the students have done more thinking of their subject and paper than they have in the past.)

Writing

The students are now ready to write. Since they have essentially written a rough draft by simply speaking the outline to their group, the students are far more prepared to write than they have been in the past. The students take their speech outline and group discussion notes and write a draft. But this time, the students are experiencing something they haven't experienced before. They know what they're going to write before they write it. They're not searching for ideas. They are not intimidated by a blank page, and they're confident they have something to say, with well-supported assertions. They know their audience; they're more convinced of their subject, and surprisingly to them and to me, this writing takes little time. The students are comfortable. Another interesting observation is the students are more ready to concentrate on good writing techniques because they're not forcing themselves to develop ideas and support. Students comment how relieved they feel: as they write, the frustrations lessen. David writes a note on his paper saying, "This assignment was fun and easy. I wrote my paper in only thirty minutes, but I had time to revise–I've never had time nor the desire to revise before. I guess I have something to say now, so I want to say it well."

Rewriting

The students now have a very good draft, much better than the final draft they usually submit without using the cycle. I can now teach them rewriting, and they understand what it means. I tell them they have already revised when they discuss the strength and weaknesses of their talk outlines and incorporate those changes into their drafts. Now they know that rewriting is not arranging commas and correcting the misspelled words I have circled. Rewriting means rethinking an essay. The rhetorical cycle then works all over again as the students rewrite their written draft. For example, the student prepares two copies of her paper for her group (her same group or another group). Her essay becomes the reading. She and the group members must brainstorm and think of ways to improve and strengthen the paper. She delivers her solutions to the group; they listen, then they discuss. Finally the student incorporates those ideas into another writing. This draft is more than any teacher could hope for. Technically it is only the second written draft, but actually, it is the fourth draft of that paper, each draft better than the first. On this final draft the student worries about editing problems that most students associate with rewriting. The student then submits her paper.

The student has now submitted a paper full of ideas and examples. This paper is well developed with organized thoughts. What surprises the student is the little work this assignment requires and how much easier it is to have other people's input before writing. The student isn't frustrated, and if she were, her peers calm the fears. She also learns the importance of outlining and organizing thoughts before writing. She knows she has something to say. For me, the teacher, as I walk around the room listening in at different groups, I also relax knowing that the students are learning that good writing expresses clear, thought-out ideas, and that those ideas are more easily presented by following the rhetorical cycle: reading, thinking, speaking, listening, discussing, and writing.

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ERIC/RCS Update: Teaching Thinking Skills in English/ Language Arts

Fran Lehr

A number of commentaries on public education, including that of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, have expressed concern that students lack the ability necessary to think clearly. A survey of documents recently entered into the ERIC data base shows that educators are beginning to address this problem in a variety of ways. Annotations of a few of those documents, which describe methods of teaching thinking skills in the English/language arts classroom, are presented below.

Annotations

Writing to Think. National Writing Project Occasional Paper No. 4. Marlene Griffith. National Writing Project, 5635 Tolman Hall, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. 1982. 14p.

Intended for middle-elementary through college level writing teachers, this booklet describes a teaching method that lets students write their own way into ideas, merging personal experience with intellectual thought in expository writing. The booklet first describes in greater detail the concept of writing-to-think as focused free writing–required but not graded or revised–that allows students to bring vague perceptions to a verbal level explicit enough for them to reconsider or extend. Griffith then presents and discusses four writing samples (two from students who write with ease and two who have difficulty) to illustrate different kinds of mindwork made possible by this kind of thinking on paper. (ED 251 842; MF01, plus postage; PC available from publisher.)

GEMS: Gifted Education Module System. Higher Level Thinking in the Junior High. Hilarie Davis and Others. State University of New York, Brockport College at Brockport. 1981. 114p.

This guide presents units of instruction that emphasize the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. An introductory section explains each of the three high level skills and presents tasks illustrating each. It then offers complete units in English, math, science, and social studies. The English unit

deals with characterization, focusing on description through analysis of elements, ordering cause and effect relationships in character actions, contrasting relationships, and examining character credibility. (ED 216 473; MF01, PC05 plus postage.)

Enriched Upper Elementary Language Arts Unit: Logical Thinking, Grades 5-6. Bulletin No. 345-D. Tom Braunreiter. Beloit Public Schools, Wisconsin. 1982. 110p.

Intended for use with gifted and talented students, this guide contains lesson plans that focus on logical thinking enrichment activities. Each plan contains objectives, necessary entry skills, teaching approaches, student activities, resources, and follow-up and evaluation suggestions. Plans are presented for a number of areas, including (1) completing analogies and determining analogous relationships, (2) identifying similarities, (3) learning to be concise, (4) noting inconsistencies, (5) building a case by logically sequencing material, (6) understanding and verifying inferences, (7) identifying and completing syllogisms, and (8) computing probability. (ED 228 816, MF01, PC05 plus postage.)

Philosophy for Children: An Approach to Critical Thinking. Fastback 206. Tony W. Johnson. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, Bloomington, IN. 1984. 41p.

Johnson describes curriculum and resources that foster and expand the philosophical thinking of elementary and middle school students. Following a discussion of Matthew Lipman's illustrative "novel" *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery,* (which helps students explore both formal and informal rules of thought), Johnson describes the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, founded by Lipman at Montclair State College, New Jersey. The remainder of the booklet describes various aspects of the Institute's program, specifically its efforts to develop curriculum designed to expand reasoning skills, beginning in early childhood education with reasoning in language comprehension and followed by skills in ethics, language arts, and social studies. (ED 242 629; MF $0.97, PC $3.90, plus postage)

Teaching Critical Thinking Skills in the Public Speaking Course: A Liberal Arts Perspective. Paul A. Fritz and Richard L. Weaver, II. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Chicago, IL, Nov 1-4, 1984. 36p.

Looking at elements of classical rhetoric, Fritz and Weaver review the literature to discover the thinking skills involved in invention, organization, composition, memory, and delivery. They conclude that students need critical thinking skills that will help them expand perspectives, draw themes together, draw conclusions, present organized data consistent with audience expectations, and write in oral style. Labelling these as framing, scenario, prescription, and imagining skills, the authors present exercises designed to assist student development of each skill within a public speaking course. They also offer suggestions for testing critical thinking. (ED 249 556; MF01, PC02 plus postage.)

How Can We Teach Intelligence? Robert J. Sternberg. Philadelphia, PA: Research for Better Schools, Inc. 1983. 33p.

Sternberg describes his "componential" theory of intelligence, which explains intelligence in terms of three types of component processes that make intelligent performance: (1) metacomponents, the higher order or executive processes that individuals use to plan what they are going to do, monitor what they are doing, and evaluate what they have done; (2) performance components, which carry out what the metacomponents have planned; and (3) knowledge-acquisition components, which are used in learning new material. Sternberg argues that if intelligence can be broken down into this set of underlying processes and strategies for combining the processes, it is possible to intervene at the level of the mental process, teach individuals what processes to use, when and how to use them, and how to combine them into workable strategies for task solution. He describes three programs that train aspects of the theory--Feurstein's "Instrumental Enrichment," Lipman's "Philosophy for Children," and "Chicago Mastery Learning: Reading"--and offers guidelines for use in choosing a thinking skills training program. (ED 242 700; MF01, PC02 plus postage.)

The ERIC/RCS Clearinghouse has several publications related to the topic. These include three ERIC Digests: *Thinking Skills in English and across the Curriculum, Metacomprehension,* and *Language across the Curriculum,* all ERIC Digests, and *Questioning: a Path to Critical Thinking,* a TRIP (Theory and Research into Practice) booklet prepared by Lella Christenbury and Patricia P. Kelly.

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Mapping and the Developmental Writer

H. Eric Branscomb

Inexperienced writers, I've found, tend to be satisfied with huge unexamined chunkings or cells of experience. The concert last Saturday was "awesome," one's girlfriend is "cute," a friend's death at the hands of a drunk driver "tragic," and that's that, you know what I mean? There's almost a fixed level of cognitive activity--fairly abstract at that--that these writers seem to be working at. One of the goals of the writing process, then, is to tease out the meaning--both the content and structure--that has initially presented itself as an undifferentiated whole to the writer. Let me insert a brief comment by way of explanation. I don't mean to imply that writing is a mechanical act of "think it then write it out perfectly." For all writers, the delight in discovering something they didn't know they knew is still there; the potential for discovery and surprise, the possibility of revising intention and concept as well as text, the making of new meanings and forms--all these are still part of the writer's process.

For composition teachers, one way of aiding this discovery process has been prewriting, a concept introduced to the educational world in the mid-1960's by Gordon Rohman. One of the functions of prewriting strategies is to serve as a heuristic, to generate raw data and substance for the drafts to follow. One of these strategies that seems especially useful for writers who need to provide detail and structure for big, vague concepts is known variously as "clustering" or "mapping." Two early proponents of mapping, Marilyn Hanf Buckley and Owen Boyle of the Bay Area Writing Project, define it as "a graphic representation of a written or oral composition, often including only key words. Using a map, students organize ideas; produce and receive information; and think, imagine, and create a product uniquely their own."

The popularity of mapping has paralleled research in brain hemisphericity. Personally, I view the left brain/right brain model as a metaphor rather than biological fact, but regardless of the actual brain cell activity, the model provides a useful shorthand for talking about two distinct cognitive types: the analytic versus the holistic thinker. In oversimplified terms, the right side of the brain is supposed to control intuitions, associations, and global perceptions--the whole picture, the indivisible unit, the molecule. The left side is linear, analytic, step-by-step--the parts, the constituent units, the atoms and subatomic particles. Even though every person is capable of both types of thinking, nearly always one side

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tends to dominate, just as one hand tends to dominate the other. Analytic people tend to be left-brained, intuitive people tend to be right brained.

Mapping
what is it?
non-linear
visual display
planning or heuristic
discovery tool as well as organizing tool
just another p/u tool
can help generate and organize
also called clustering
other types of heuristics
outlines (blah!)
not a heuristic anyway
I use a large sheet of computer paper
how to use
drafting from
not much help in revising. I've found
be alert - easy not to revise (eliminate?) need for revising - it's just a heuristic
value of
right brain for right brained
left brained for left brained
creative intuitive associations most insightful
visual
most kids visual learners - true??(check)
organized initially (some)
allows for immediate placement in space of one detail with related ones
clusters like spider plants become subsections or even R's.
combines speed (& therefore fluency & idea generation) of brainstorming w/ rudimentary attempts at clustering (i.e. concept formation)
weaknesses
not for narratives
not for everyone (why not?)
really no detail
could produce general/abstract nothing
for this reason probably advanced, though Bobby was rt w/ 7-yr-olds too.
post-it tape
initially synthetic & intuitive rather than analytic - the analysis most happens during drafting
created by linear learners e.g. computer science majors
just if it follows listing in curriculum
refine or even adapt a new focus
see relationships (clusters)
add movement words to organize
circles as a one-piece (Barbie)
global view
not for readers
records experience, understanding
frees out the concept more lucky from general to concrete (see models on two directions of cognitive development)
read words key words subsumed words
real life developed with detail
freewriting unfocused
brainstorming lists
plenty but not organized
pack a cluster & start writing freely
leads to conclusions ??

Figure 1

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Mapping makes use of the right side of the brain to a greater extent than listing or outlining because it builds on what is basically a right brain process--apprehension of a whole. It then forces the writer to apply left brained processes--rendering the pieces of that whole-- to it. Essentially it involves writing the topic in the center of a blank sheet of paper (I use large sheets of computer paper) and quickly, as in brainstorming, writing down words or phrases that are suggested by the topic. These are connected to the topic by lines, and branch out from the central idea like spokes from a hub. If one of these key words at the end of a spoke suggests another word or phrase, then it becomes the center of its own secondary network of spoked ideas. A key word or a detail can be added anywhere it logically belongs on the map, rather than simply next in a linear list. Usually, the further away from the abstract hub the information is placed, the more specific it is, so the map helps the writer move towards a more complete specification of her topic. A map looks like a 2-D Tinkertoy assembly when it's finished. Figure 1 presents the actual map I did for this paper.

Whereas listing generates only raw data, and outlining imposes order where there's nothing to order (like sculpting air), mapping allows the writer to do both, to generate and, since details are placed on the map connected to other associated details, provide a rudimentary structure, to see relationships as well as the raw data generated. Each of the small clusters on the page, the foci of peripheral details, is the basis for a roughly organized paragraph or other size subsection. Writers find that it's an extra bonus when the same prewriting strategy supplies both a rough organization or structure as well as ideas and data. In this map by a student in freshman composition (figure 2), note how the writer generated a good deal of specific content and a rough structure for it.

Notice that not only is there organization to the information, but that the organization is non-linear. By constantly returning to the center, the writer is able to free herself from the bonds of time and physical space. I have no research to confirm this, yet, but there's every indication that non-linear prewriting such as mapping leads to non-linear drafts, i.e. not description or narration. While not intending to demean the art of describing or narrating--they are invaluable skills for a writer and difficult to master--mature exposition or reader-based prose ordinarily does not use chronological or spatial organizing principles (which as Linda Flower has shown are often the structures associated with writer-based prose). A quick, unscientific survey of the writing from the last two semesters of students I've worked with reveals that, of the papers which started with mapping as a prewrite, over 75% were non-narrative in structure, while in the same classes, when

a list or freewrite was the heuristic, 100% of the papers were narrative or descriptive. More rigorous research would probably confirm that mapping encourages students to turn the corner from descriptive/narrative writing and move to the more sophisticated structures of reader-based prose.

Figure 2

In addition to providing a working organizational plan for the writing, mapping also makes visually obvious a new focus, should one appear. Often the topic in the center of the page has a few idea spokes branching out, but one of the clusters in the periphery has a disproportionate number of branches. It has literally taken over the page. The perceptive writer can see the new focus, the new center of interest, the new clustering of material around this other key word. In the map in figure 3, also by a freshman composition student, you can see this new focus of ideas occurring. The writer's original topic, "How I got started in music and where I went with it," is unwieldy. The writer noticed that the cluster around "Marching Band" was more developed and wrote her paper on that topic rather than her intended one. Thus before a draft is even attempted, a writer can revise her original intentions. A new map, with the newly discovered topic, may be started, or a draft begun right from the original map with the lopsided cluster.

Drafting from a prewritten map presents two problems for the inexperienced writer: where to begin, and how to generate adequate specific detail. After any type of prewriting, I like to have my students try lead writing, composing a number of possible beginnings for the paper, choosing a promising one, and draft from it. The second problem, detail, is crucial for writers. In mapping, no matter how big the sheet of paper is, there's not enough space to move to the outer limits of a concept and all its differentiations. Much of the map will remain as "key words," what Vygotsky would call "saturated" words and Linda Flower refers to as "code words" in her writer-based prose. Note the very weak map in figure 4. Each circle is a saturated word, needing full explication. In this particular case, the writer unfortunately stopped before producing a fully useful map and the result was a weak paper, unfocused and superficial. Saturated words in the map, such as "starting a family" or "vacations" need to be developed in detail, either on the map or shaped at the point of utterance, during drafting.

Once the rough draft is finished, students shouldn't be misled into thinking that mapping (or any extensive prewriting) will eliminate the need for revision. Revision, as always, is still the backbone of a writer's process. Revising a draft developed from a map is different from other types of drafts, but it is still just as necessary. Notice how different is the seventh draft of this paper, which you're reading now, from the map in figure 1. Revising a draft written from a map usually will call for more *adding* during the revision, whereas for experienced writers working from brainstormed lists, revising will consist more often in cutting from the abundance of material the prewrite has generated.

In comparison with other standard prewriting strategies (listing, freewriting, tagmemics, and outlining), mapping offers these advantages. The brainstormed list, frequently advocated as a useful device for getting started, is quicker and more effective for freeing up the mind for writing. It has the added advantage over freewriting of actually generating a good deal of usable content. Freewriting is supposed to be 90% junk, with a pearl of insight hidden somewhere, which can, at least in Macrorie's scheme, serve as the focus for a second "focused freewriting" session that begins to focus on the substance. Formal Roman numeral outlines are really not heuristics at all, but organizing techniques, useful after a good prewrite has collected an abundance of information or a rough draft has discovered substance but not form. Requir-

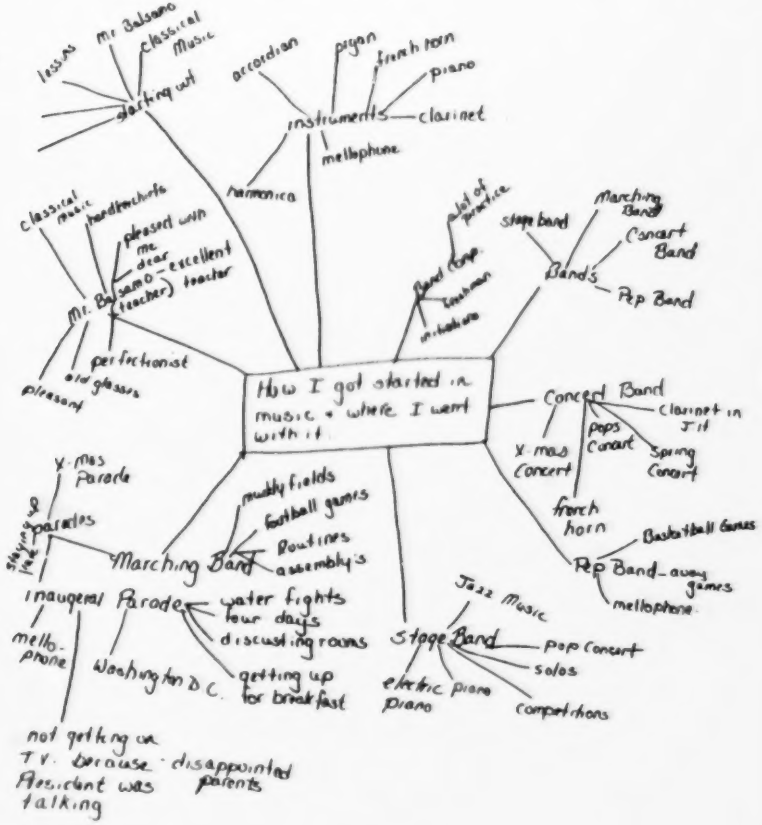

Figure 3

ing an outline before prewriting or drafting is a waste of time. The tagmemics of Young, Becker and Pike are useful for certain types of writers in their controlled, dispassionate approach to idea generation. Their value for technical writing is well demonstrated, but I like to use them in rare occasions when I have a very undisciplined, intuitive, creative type who can't manage to complete anything to anyone's satisfaction--the inspired writer who only writes on inspiration, which as we all know descends very rarely in one's lifetime. It's like exercising the left hemisphere in a person with a hypertrophied right hemisphere.

All these types of prewriting strategies are valid (with the exception of outlining) and useful in their place, and mapping has its place too in the writing teacher's repertoire. Since mapping is associated with the right hemisphere, it can lead to an entirely different set of insights than can the more linear left-brained types of prewriting. Don Murray says that even working with the same information on the same topic, when mapping he never fails to generate different material than with his other collecting techniques. I am not recommending it in place of any others; in fact, I don't introduce it to my Basic Writing classes until the midpoint of the semester, since it tends to be a slightly less fluent way of generating information and it tends to encourage saturated words which need development. I like to encourage my Basic Writers to work inductively from information in lists until they're comfortable with the idea of specific detail, to solve the problems of skimpiness that appear in such writings as the "5th Anniversary" map [Figure 4] and paper. Once my writers know how to be specific, I then introduce them to mapping. And for my more advanced Freshman Composition students, I often require two prewrites--a list and a map--to encourage multiple perspectives and abundant information.

Mapping provides a way to build initially on the documented strengths of my weak writers--their right-brained global perceptions and intuitive creativity--and exercise their analytic left hemispheres to produce the type of reader-based prose expected of college writers. And for the left-brained people in our classes--the computer programmers who are disillusioned when we can't give them a flow chart for writing, the English majors who'd rather analyze Shakespeare than enjoy him--mapping opens up a new universe of ideas, associations and meaning.

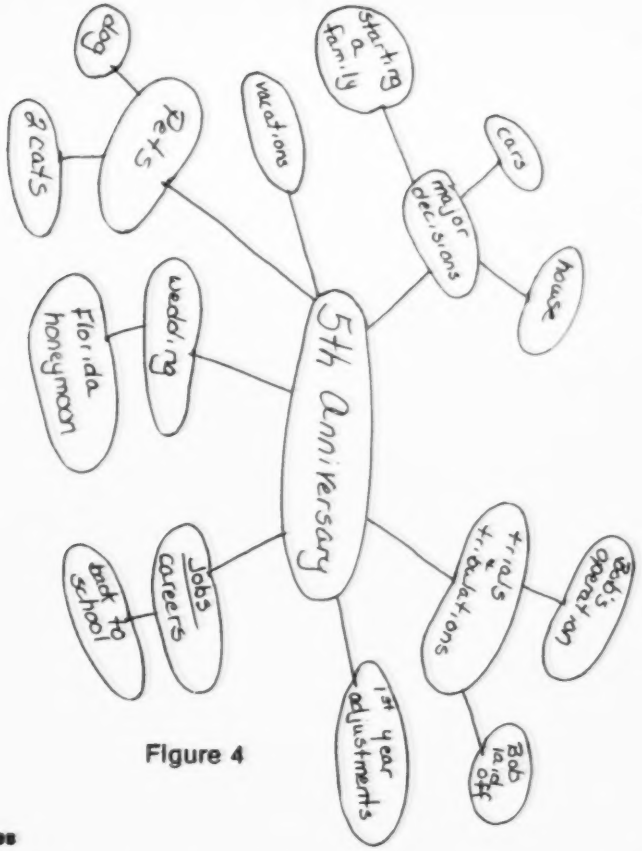

Figure 4

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Call for Manuscripts

The editor of *The Leaflet* invites articles on the following themes for possible publication in future issues. Questions asked here are designed only as a springboard for thoughts on the topic.

Spring 1986: *Ethnic Literature*
Deadline for Manuscripts: February 15, 1986

1. How is ethnic literature integrated into the program of study?
2. What authors are especially noteworthy? Which do students enjoy? What authors are appropriate for what grades?
3. Must students understand the literature of the majority before they can appreciate literature of the minority?
4. Who selects the literature to be read? Teachers? Text book companies? Students? Parents? What criteria is used to select minority literature?

Fall 1986: *Teaching and Learning Styles*
Deadline for Manuscripts: August 15, 1986

1. How might you describe your teaching style? How do you consciously adjust that style? What causes you to adjust your style?
2. How do we accommodate varying learning styles within the classroom? How do we reach as many students as possible?
3. How do various types of activities (i.e. collaborative learning, discussion, lecture) address the needs of different learners?
4. What types of learners have the most success with the subject matter? the least success? Why?

Winter 1987: *Synthesis*
Deadline for Manuscripts: October 15, 1985

1. What other fields of study do we integrate into the English curriculum? American studies? Women's studies? Regional studies?
2. How do we teach students to synthesize ideas?
3. How are our students integrated within the classroom? mixed abilities? differing backgrounds? How do we accommodate such variation? What creates a cohesive unit?
4. How do we integrate the language skills of thinking, reading, speaking, listening, and writing?

Information for Authors

The Leaflet is published three times a year by the New England Association of Teachers of English. *The Leaflet* prints articles on all facets and levels of English/Language Arts instruction. Now in its 85th year, *The Leaflet* is the oldest of the journals dedicated to the teaching of English.

Editorial Policy: Articles about the teaching of English, especially in New England, are invited. Classroom teachers of all grade levels are encouraged to share methods that work with their students. Recent research, both formal and informal, on teaching English is of special interest. Reviews of books related to the planned themes are also welcome. Each issue focuses on a specific theme.

Manuscripts: Manuscripts should be no more than 15 pages in length, typed on non-erasable bond, and double-spaced. References should be listed at the end of the article. Internal documentation should be utilized whenever possible. For guidance see the newly revised 1984 *MLA Style Sheet*. Send the original and one copy to the address below and keep a copy for yourself. Please include a brief description of your present position and professional activities. A self-addressed, stamped envelope should be included for return of the manuscript. If you wish acknowledgement of receipt of the manuscript, enclose a self-addressed, stamped post card or send the manuscript by registered mail. A decision concerning the manuscript is normally reached within six weeks.

Publication: The Fall issue appears in October-November, the Winter issue in February-March, and the Spring issue in May-June. Authors receive two copies of the issue when it is mailed to the membership.

On a More Personal Note: The above guidelines sometimes appear formidable to potential writers. If you have an idea on a planned topic, look over recent issues of *The Leaflet* for a workable form. You might like to send me a rough draft for feedback. If so, start the process early enough for me to respond and for you to rework the article.

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